



In 2019, the Alliance built a demonstration garden at Crail Ranch using native plants that are wildlife friendly, water wise, and preserving of the historic landscape.

This is our garden's story two years later.



Inspire - Educate - Conserve

Why Plant Native Plants?



Native plants are adapted to local conditions, requiring less fertilizer and pesticides.



Native plants require less watering to thrive and can help control stormwater runoff.

Native plants improve air quality by reducing area for mowing and sequestering carbon.



Native plants provide food and shelter for wildlife and support pollinators.



Native Plants Support Wildlife



Native plants are the foundation of the terrestrial food web.

Because animals directly or indirectly depend on plants for their food, the diversity of animals in a particular habitat is very closely linked to the diversity of the plants in that habitat.

90% of native insects have developed specialized relationships with native plants.

Songbird babies rely on thousands of caterpillars and other insects supported by native plants.

Research indicates that when a landscape dips below 80% native plants, the reproduction rate of birds begins to drop.



Build it and they will come!

Native plants and eco-friendly gardening practices provide natural sources of the four elements of habitat:



Food



Water



Cover



Raising Young

In our 2nd full growing season, a white-crowned sparrow nested and successfully reared her young among the prairie sage in our largest garden.





Winter

During winter months, elk visited the garden, eating the standing vegetation and leaving evidence along the way.

Spring

In the spring, wire cloches were placed to protect our resident bunny's favorite plants.

Four Seasons

If something is not eating the plants, then the garden is not part of the ecosystem.

Summer

Summer bursts with life, color, and brilliance. Small stone water basins provided our resident white-crowned sparrow with readily available water.

Fall

Fall at the gardens is void of bright color, but rich in earthy hues and sculptural forms. The gardens are a tranquil space to celebrate the beauty and resilience of the botanical world.



Crail Gardens is a Gathering Place



6 Events



142 People

Native Plant Sale • Spring Open House • Noxious Weed Bouquet Contest
Water Wise Landscape Tour • Inaugural Cornhole Tournament Fundraiser • Summer Wine Down



**Thank you Big Sky for turning out for our inaugural
Bag the Peak cornhole tournament fundraiser!**



The competition was spirited, the food was delicious (thank you Lindsay Hurlbut of Butter and Salt) and the weather was perfect. Congratulations to Sean & Dave for your undefeated run and becoming the 2021 Bag the Peak Champions! We'll see you next year...so start designing your team jerseys!

Community Impact



"...Crail Demo Gardens are a real testament to the beauty and utility of planting natives - saving water, providing habitat, and lovely to boot. Kudos to both Crail Ranch and the Gallatin Invasive Species Alliance on their project! Birder friends - know they are open to the public for visiting during daylight hours."

- Social media comment by Elizabeth Madden



Planned since 2017, the Gardens at Crail Ranch are finally having a positive impact at the museum.



Appearance and Ambiance: The native species flower beds enhance and complement the historic grounds. The gardens welcome all to the ranch, and the grounds have increased in popularity as a place to stroll, particularly in the morning and the evening. This pocket park provides a peaceful respite in the midst of the busy Meadow. People have adopted the Gardens at Crail Ranch as an important part of their peripatetic routine, and they sometimes sit on those Aldo Leopold benches and simply relax and enjoy the beauty and the quiet.



Purpose and Function: Nearly all who initially visit for the history take some time to study the flowers and ask questions. The gardens, though, are increasingly attracting many visitors who arrive specifically to view the flowers. It is fun to watch the "repeat" visitors, who arrive every few weeks to snap photos and chat about the progression of growth and color throughout the season. It is clear that they are using the information for their own private landscapes. When these visitors are asked if they would like a history tour, they sometimes agree. So the gardens are luring folks to learn the local history. We love it!



I've spent a lot of the last 18 years at the Historic Crail Ranch, and I can firmly state that the flower beds have attracted more birds and bees.

Congratulations on your hard work ... and that of your volunteers. It is a great partnership.

- Anne Marie Mistretta, Lead Conservator

Thank You Volunteers!

"The glory of gardening: hands in the dirt, head in the sun, heart with nature."

- Alfred Austin



30 volunteers



105 hours

With volunteer help, we:



Built/installed a clippings bin, allowing us to store plant materials to ensure beneficial insects are able to complete their life cycle on site.



Installed an interpretive sign



Planted two native lawn areas by adding topsoil, seeding with Idaho fescue, and installing temporary irrigation.

Weeded & maintained the garden

Planted 130 more wildflowers & 3 new species

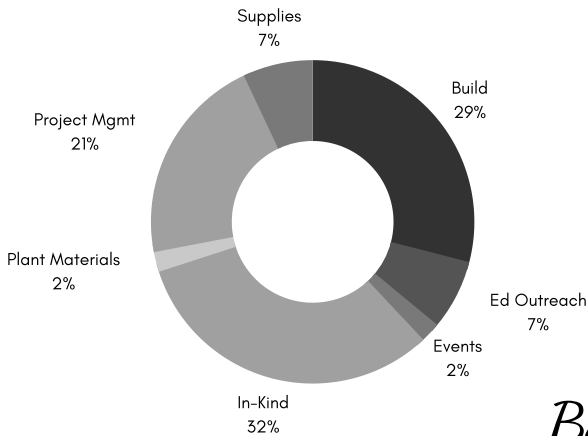


Thank You Partners & Donors!

2018 -2021



\$87,856



Crail Gardens is conservation in action!

In a time of climate disruption and mass extinction, what we put in our landscapes matters. While one person can't tackle climate change alone, one person can choose to landscape with plants that support wildlife and ecosystem health. It's a tangible way for individuals to implement known solutions to the wide-ranging threats we face.

Volunteer · Donate

*Purchase native plants at our spring sale
Purchase Crail Garden items from our shop
gallatinisa.org*



Bee a part of the solution - plant native plants!

Partners & Donors



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